



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Conservation Security Program Indiana 2005

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Leon Mercer does his best to improve the land and protect water quality by using buffers of grass and trees along the streams and ponds on his farm.



A no-till pioneer since the early 1990's, Mercer speaks at a field day on his farm and encourages other farmers to no-till their fields.



True partners in conservation, Leon and Barbara Mercer signed a 2005 CSP contract with NRCS State Conservationist Jane Hardisty and District Conservationist Doris Scully on their farm in Clay County, Indiana.

Stewardship has its rewards: Mercer Farm Among Indiana's 2005 CSP Contract Holders

Leon and Barbara Mercer were recognized by USDA's Natural Resources Service as one of the state's Conservation Security Program participants at a signing ceremony in Clay County, August 16, 2005.

CSP is a voluntary program that rewards landowners for their conservation stewardship and improvements they've made to soil, water, air, energy, plant, and animal life.

Progressive farming with conservation in mind ...

Leon Mercer has spent all his adult life working in agriculture and preserving the family farm heritage. He and his wife Barbara are considered to be two of the most progressive farmers in Indiana. Leon has farmed 100 percent no-till on his land since early 1990's, long before others in the county would consider it. After attending and hosting many no-till conferences and learning by trial and error, Leon knows what will work on the 2,300 acres that he farms.

Mercer believes in and is committed to improving soil quality. He rotates corn-soybeans and corn-soybeans-wheat. His use of annual legumes in the crop rotation is to reduce energy needed for nitrogen production.

He also has introduced cover crops into his rotation to build up organic matter in the soil. He said, "I normally leave the wheat stubble to provide organic matter back in the soil rather than baling it for straw. This makes more profit for me."

With a passion for improving the land and addressing water quality, Mercer buffers all of his streams and ponds with grass and trees. He minimizes his pesticide use by selecting plant varieties with minimal application needs. He soil tests and uses yield monitoring equipment to determine the crop nutrient needs to reduce fertilizer inputs and improve water quality.

Indiana CSP Quick Facts for 2005:

Watersheds: 6

Auglaize
Middle Wabash Deer
Middle Wabash Busseron
St. Joseph
Tippecanoe
Upper Maumee

Watershed Acreage:

2,949,557

Estimated Number of Farms:

7,626

Cropland:

1,800,511 acres

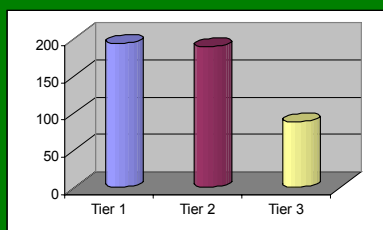
Pasture Land:

542,329 acres

CSP Participation:

Sought CSP info 1,585
Attended workshops 1,963
Applied 683
Enrolled 621

Tier Distribution:

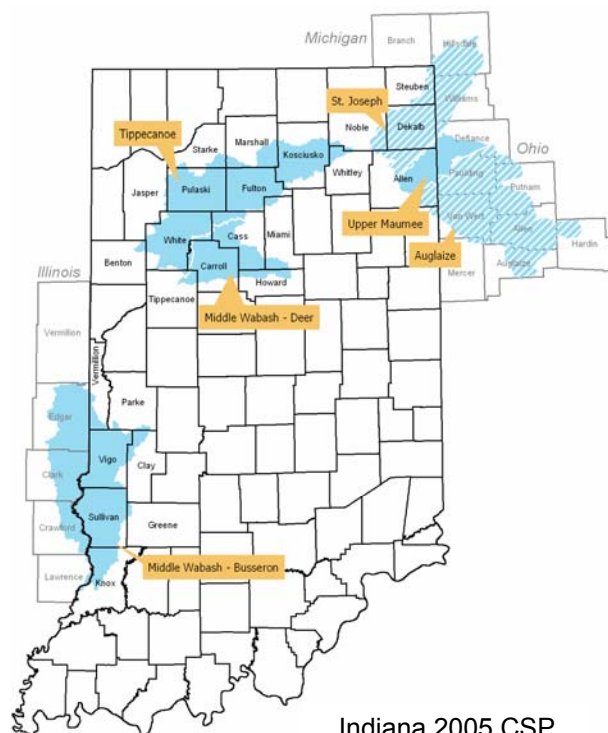


Tier I: 194
Tier 2: 189
Tier 3: 88

Typical Enhancements:

- Soil management
- Energy management
- Nutrient management
- Habitat management

Indiana 2005 CSP Highlights



Indiana 2005 CSP Watersheds

Watershed	Eligible Applications	Tier 1	Tier II	Tier III
Auglaize	17	7	6	4
Middle Wabash Deer	100	44	37	19
Middle Wabash Busseron	144	49	67	28
St. Joseph	47	28	8	11
Tippecanoe	260	129	118	21
Upper Maumee	59	29	13	17
Total Elig Applications	627	285	249	100
Total Contracts	471	194	189	88
Total '05 Payments	\$5,095,751	\$1,299,028	\$2,632,297	\$1,164,426

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IN CSP 2005